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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0450  
INFO RUEHOO/CHINA POSTS COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE 0020  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 0848  
RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO 0004  
RUEHSQ/AMEMBASSY SKOPJE 0104  
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB 0082  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 004956

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TAGS: PREL PGOV SR CH

SUBJECT: PRC/KOSOVO: BEIJING WILLING TO ACCEPT INDEPENDENCE  
PROVIDED SERBS AGREE

Classified By: Political External Unit Chief Edgard Kagan. Reasons 1.4  
(b/d).

(C) The PRC is not opposed to independence for Kosovo as long as all interested parties agree, according to MFA International Organization Department UN Division Director Yang Tao. In a March 15 meeting, Yang said that the Kosovo issue is very sensitive because of its unique history. Noting that the PRC supports final status talks, Yang said Beijing believes some countries are prejudging the resolution of the question of Kosovo's sovereignty and even trying to influence the outcome by calling for independence. He said the PRC would look favorably at an agreement that was reached through the final status talks and is acceptable to all the parties. Expressing his personal view, Yang commented that China accepts the possibility of a referendum to determine Kosovo's future status and would support the results of such a referendum provided it reflects the will of the people in Serbia and Montenegro and not just the residents of Kosovo. Noting strong Russian views on this matter, Yang stated that Kosovo is a very complicated issue that is particularly sensitive for China and could also set precedents that could have a negative impact on a number of Soviet bloc countries.

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